

Hello, students. My name is Dr. Martina Shabram, and I will be your instructor for today's lesson. I'm genuinely excited to teach you these concepts. So let's get started.

In today's lesson, we're going to learn about the special relationship between subject and verb. We'll learn how to identify a subject and a verb in a variety of sentence types and how to correct errors in subject-verb agreement. So let's start.

In any correct sentence in English, you'll find at least two things-- a subject and a verb. Those elements make up a sentence, which is defined as a group of words that expresses a complete thought and includes a subject and a verb. A subject is the who or the what the sentence is about, a noun or pronoun, and it can also be a noun clause. And in a sentence, this subject is directly connected to the verb. A verb is a word that defines actions or indicates a state of being. We'll talk more about verbs in a minute.

Let's think more about subjects. Some subjects are physical things, which a reader might be able to picture concretely, such as in this sentence. But some subjects are less concrete, and an abstract concept might very well be the subject of a sentence, like this. Just about anything can end up as the subject of a sentence-- car, energy, intelligence.

We can even have a compound subject, which is when more than one noun is linked together and serves as the subject. For example, "The dog and cat are friends." Both the dog and the cat are the subject of that sentence. You might even have a sentence where the subject is a singular indefinite pronoun, like, "Nobody knows how the dog and cat became friends." There, nobody is the subject. This is also true for plural indefinite pronouns, like in this sentence-- "both of them like to nap."

When we have a singular indefinite pronoun as the sentence subject, the verb will also always be in the singular form, like "knows," "likewise." Plural indefinite pronouns will have plural verbs, such as "like."

So now that we're more comfortable with subjects, let's think about their buddies, the verbs. When you're looking for the verb in a sentence, you'll find that it's usually right after the noun. But this isn't true all the time. So you'll have to get familiar with verbs in order to spot them. We've already discussed verbs as action words-- that is, words that describe movement and physical being. You probably know tons of these, like "run" and "dance." A sentence with one of these words might look like this.

But verbs can also be linking words, and those kinds of verbs don't describe movement in the same

way. Linking verbs connect the subject to information about the subject and do not convey action. So let's think about the way these words work as a kind of mathematical equation. In this sentence, what's the subject-- "the day." And what's the verb-- "is." Which means that "the day" equals "hot." So a linking verb is like an equal sign, equating the subject with an important piece of information about that subject.

All of those "be" verbs are linking verbs, but there are others. Words like "seems" and even "tastes" can be linking verbs. See how they work in our sentence? OK, "tastes" doesn't make a lot of sense here. But it might in this sentence.

What about the relationship between these two parts of a sentence? Well, we know that the verb is the word that describes action or a state of being, and we know that the subject is the actor of that verb, i.e. The thing doing the action or existing in the state of being. So let's think about how these actors and actions come together in sentences.

There are a couple of general patterns of sentences that you're likely to see and use-- subject plus verb, which looks like this, subject plus verb plus complement, which looks like this, and subject plus verb plus object, which looks like this. An object is the item acted upon by the subject in the sentence. In these sentences, as in most sentences, the subject comes before the verb. But this isn't always the way sentences look. Sometimes the verb comes first.

Also, sometimes the subject or verb will be compound, which means that there will be more than one subject or more than one verb in their own clause together. For example-- so even if the order isn't what you expect, remember that to find a subject or subjects, always ask-- let's look at some more complicated sentences.

The boy and Susan are both doing the action-- eating the pancakes, right? So this sentence is an example of a compound subject. The more complicated a sentence, the further apart the verb and subject might be. There might even be a dependent clause between the subject and verb, like this.

So subjects and verbs work together in a sentence. And this means that they have to agree with each other in order to avoid confusing readers. That means that the tense and number need to be the same for subject and verb when the sentence is in present tense.

A subject might be singular or plural. So in a sentence, the verb will need to reflect the subject's state. It just wouldn't make sense if I wrote-- elephants, the subject, is plural. So the verb, "to jump," needs to be plural as well, and that means it shouldn't have that S at the end. Most of the time, plural

nouns, when they are subjects, have an S at the end of the word. Some, however, have an irregular form. So, for example, "child" would become "children" when it's plural, not "childs."

Assuring that you've got the correct number agreement is usually pretty easy since regular verbs always end in S when they're singular, like "he jumps," "she flies," "he walks." And when regular verbs are plural, that S is gone-- "they jump," "birds fly," "people walk." So let's practice.

See how "cats jump" agree and are both plural? The same rule about agreement is true for which person a sentence is in, i.e. in the sentence "I run," the subject and verb are both in first person. And in the sentence "The mouse runs," both are in third person.

OK, but when you have irregular verbs, things get more complicated because an irregular verb is a verb that does not follow the standard pattern for verb formation. So to use irregular verbs correctly, you'll have to remember how each one agrees with its subject. You probably already know the most common irregular groups, like this singular-- "is," "was," "has," and "does--" and the plural-- "are," "were," "have," and "do."

Here's a sentence with one of those at work. When the number of this sentence changes, the verb "to be" doesn't act the same as the other verbs do when plural. So what about this sentence? Does that seem right? In that sentence, the irregular verb "to have" is in its singular form, but "elephants" is plural. To fix this error, find the plural form of that irregular verb and swap it in.

Now, even if there are words, phrases, or clauses separating the subject and verb, we still need to make sure that subject and verb agree. Take this sentence, for example. What's the verb? Well, the action in this sentence is focused on hiding. So who is it that's doing that hiding-- the cats. So do the subject and the verb match? "Cats" is plural. So "hide--" well, that's plural too. And yes, that means they match.

Here, "the cats" is plural and "the mouse" is singular, but they're all sharing dinner, so this is a compound subject. And the verb "to share" needs to agree. OK, how about this last one? Here, you'll notice that this sentence has a dependent clause. So the subject and the verb that need to do their agreement will be in the independent clause. Here, we have "cats" and "enjoy." Do those match? Yes.

So what did we learn today? We broke down subjects and verbs to learn how they come together to form a sentence. We learned about the varieties of subjects that we might see. We also learned about the varieties of verbs we might use. We worked out the relationship between subjects and verbs in a sentence and how to spot subjects and verbs even in more complicated sentences. Finally,

we practiced subject-verb agreement in our sentences to make sure that subject and verb share the same number and person and our readers aren't confused. Well, students, I hope you had as much fun as I did. Thank you.